

Sūrah Al-Quraish

(The Quraish)

This Sūrah is Makki, and it has 4 verses

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

With the name of Allah, the All-Merciful, the Very-Merciful

Verses 1 - 4

لَا يُلْفِ قُرَيْشٍ (۱) إِلَيْهِمْ رُحْلَةُ الشِّتَاءِ وَالصَّيفِ (۲) فَلْيَعْبُدُوا رَبَّ هَذَا الْبَيْتِ (۳) الَّذِي أَطْعَمَهُم مِّنْ جُوعٍ وَآمَنَهُم مِّنْ خَوْفٍ (۴)

Because of the familiarity of the Quraish, [1] that is, their familiarity with the trips of winter and summer, [2] they must worship the Lord of this House, [3] who gave them food against hunger, and gave them security against fear. [4]

Commentary

The Subject-matter of Sūrah Al-Fil and Sūrah Al-Quraish

All commentators concur that the subject-matter of the two Sūrahs is so closely related that in some of the copies of the Qur'ān they had been written as a single Sūrah without the insertion of *bismillah* between them. But when Sayyidnā 'Uthmān ᷻ complied a standard copy of the Holy Qur'ān with the consensus of all the companions of the Holy Prophet ﷺ, he separated these two Sūrahs and inserted *bismillah* between them, and the two Sūrahs.

Lexical Analysis

لَا يُلْفِ قُرَيْشٍ (Because of the familiarity of the Quraish 106:1). The particle *li* is a preposition. According to the rules of Arabic grammar, it should be linked with another sentence. What is that sentence here? In answer to this question, different possibilities are highlighted by the exegetes.

Keeping in view the close relation of the present Sūrah with the previous one, some of them have held that the following sentence should be taken as understood here: "أَنَا أَهْلُكُنَا أَصْبَحُ الْفَيْلِ" [We [Allah] destroyed the 'people of the elephant' so that the Quraish, who were familiar with two commercial trips during winter and summer, may not have any obstacle in their trips, and by this trading activity they might develop a certain prestige for them and respect them." A second school of interpreters has taken the following sentence as understood: (اعجِبُوا) [One should wonder on the Quraish undertaking winter and summer journeys freely and safely.) A third school of interpreters says that this is the *lam* of *ta'lil* and it is syntactically related to the sentence that follows it (فَلَيَعْبُدُوا رَبَّ هَذَا الْبَيْتِ) [they must worship the Lord of this House.) The Sūrah draws attention to the fact that the Quraish used to make two trade-journeys - one in winter to Yemen and another in summer to Syria. These trade-journeys made them wealthy and affluent. This was possible because Allah annihilated their enemies, the people of the elephant, in an exemplary way and created in the hearts of the people an awe and reverence for them. People held them in high esteem, respect and honor in all the territories where they went.

Superiority of Quraish

This Sūrah indicates that Quraish, of all the tribes of Arabia, was most acceptable in the sight of Allah. The Prophet ﷺ is reported to have said: "Verily, Allah selected Kinānah from the offspring of Prophet Ismā'il عليه السلام and selected Quraish from the progeny of Kinānah. From the Quraish, Allah selected Banū Hāshim and from Banū Hāshim He selected me." [Baghawī on the authority of Wāthilah Ibn Asqa']. Another Tradition reports that the Messenger of Allah ﷺ said: "People will follow Quraish in matters of good as well as in matters of evil." [Muslim on the authority of Jābir, as quoted by Mazhari]. The reason for the selection of the tribes mentioned in the first Tradition is presumably on account of their special abilities, innate capacities and natural endowments. Even in the days of paganism and ignorance, when people practiced *kufr* and *shirk*, their morals and inborn abilities were of a very high standard. They had the perfect capacity to accept the truth. This is the reason why most of the blessed Companions and Friends of Allah were Quraishites. [Mazhari]

Verse [106:2] (رَحْلَةُ الشَّتَاءِ وَالصَّيفِ) (...their familiarity with the trips of winter and summer.) It is a known fact that Makkah is situated in an utterly bleak and arid valley where no agricultural produce grows, nor are there any orchards where the people of Makkah could reap any kind

of fruits. Therefore, the founder of the House of Allah, Sayyidnā Ibrāhīm Khalil-ullah (الصلوة عليه), prayed to Allah at the time of founding the city, thus: [2:126] (رَبِّ اجْعَلْ هَذَا الْبَلَدَ آمِنًا أَرْزُقْ أَهْلَهُ، مِنَ الشَّرَرِ) (My Lord, make this a city of peace, and provide its people with fruits) and this fact is mentioned in [28:57], thus: (يُنْجِي إِلَيْهِ تَمَرُّثُ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ) (to which the fruits of everything are drawn)". The Quraish thus needed to make these commercial trips out of Makkah into the neighboring territories to bring the necessities of life to their city. Sayyidnā Ibn ‘Abbās (رضي الله عنهما) reports that the people of Makkah were in a state of abject poverty and Hāshim, the great grandfather of the Prophet ﷺ, exhorted the Quraish to undertake the trading caravans to the neighboring territories. As Syria was a cold region, they went there in summer; and Yemen had a warm climate, so they went there in winter to carry out their commercial activities. They, after their commercial ventures that brought to them great profits and gains, would return to their city safely due to the respect that the people had for them, because they were the keepers and custodians of Allah's sanctuary. Therefore, whoever knew them would honor them. Even those who came to them and traveled with them, would be safe because of them. Hashim was the leader of the Quraish and maintained the economic principle to distribute among the rich and the poor members of the Quraish the gains and the profits made in their business. As a result, even the poor people lived like the wealthy people. Furthermore, an additional Divine favor was granted to them: Allah spared them the trouble of making these annual trips, in that the areas adjacent to Makkah such as Yemen, Tabālah and Ḥarsh were made fertile, fecund and productive where corns, food grains and other agricultural produce grew abundantly - even more than their need. As a result, they had to carry these agricultural produce to Jeddah where they sold them. Thus most of the necessities were available in Jeddah. The people of Makkah, instead of undertaking the two long journeys, went to Jeddah, merely two stations away, to bring their necessities of life. In the current verse, Allah mentions His favor upon them.

Verse [106:3] (فَلَيَعْبُدُوا رَبَّ هَذَا الْبَيْتِ) (they must worship the Lord of this House.) Having mentioned the Divine favors, the Quraish are especially enjoined to express their gratitude to 'the Lord of this House'. Here, out of many attributes of Allah, 'the Lord of this House' is singled out, because it was this House that became the source and fountain of all blessings for them.

Verse [106:4] (الَّذِي أَطْعَمَهُمْ مِنْ جُنُونٍ وَأَمْنَهُمْ مِنْ خَوْفٍ) (Who gave them food against hunger, and gave them security against fear.) The verse comprehensively captures all that was needed for the Quraish to live

happily and peacefully in the world. The first phrase (Who gave them food against hunger) implies that they were provided all year round with every kind of fruit and food. The security referred to in the second phrase (and gave them security against fear) includes security from enemies and robbers (who, out of their respect to them as guardians of Ka'bah, spared them from their attacks), and it also includes security from the punishment in the Hereafter (for those who fulfilled the necessary conditions of faith).

Special Note

Ibn Kathīr says that whoever worships Allah according to the command given in this verse, Allah will give him safety, not only in this world, but also security from punishment in the Hereafter. And whoever deviates from this command, He will deprive him of both types of safety and security as exemplified in the following verse [16:112] :

صَرَبَ اللَّهُ مَثَلًا قَرْيَةً كَانَتْ أَمْنَةً مُطْمَئِنَةً يَأْتِيهَا رِزْقُهَا رَغْدًا مِنْ كُلِّ مَكَانٍ فَنَكَرَتْ
بِأَنَّهُمُ اللَّهُ فَادَّاقَهَا اللَّهُ لِبَاسَ الْجُوعِ وَالْخُوفِ بِمَا كَانُوا يَصْنَعُونَ ﴿١١٢﴾

(And Allah has given an example that there was a town, secure and satisfied, with its sustenance coming in plenty from every place. Then, it turned ungrateful to the bounties of Allah; so, Allah made it taste hunger and terror [cast over it] like a garment in return of what its people used to do. [16:112]

A Great Benefit

Abul Ḥasan Qazwīnī has stated that anyone who fears his enemy or an affliction, should recite Sūrah Al-Quraish. It will give him security from fear and calamity. This is cited by Imām Jazrī and he says that this Sūrah has been tried and tested successfully for this purpose. Qādī Thana'ullah Pānī Patti cites this in his Tafsīr Mazhārī and says that his Shaikh Mirzā Mazhar Jān-i-Jānān instructed him to recite this Sūrah at the time of fear and danger, and said its recitation has been tested and tried to avert all kinds of calamities and afflictions. Qādī Thana'ullah says that he has experienced it several times.

Alḥamdu lillah
The Commentary on
Sūrah Al-Quraish
Ends here